

Know Your HIV Status

BE POWERFUL: KNOW YOUR HIV STATUS

DOVER – This year marks the 20th anniversary of National HIV Testing Day, and on this occasion, the Division of Public Health (DPH) urges every Delawarean aged 15 to 65 to be screened for HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) infection.

Although more than 3,500 people are known to be living with HIV in Delaware, statistics indicate that one in seven of those infected don't know they have the disease. That means Delaware could have an additional 600 people that are infected, yet unaware that they have the disease. Getting tested for HIV means you are powerful in your own life – you can seek treatment and protect your partners and loved ones from infection.

In April 2013, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) released HIV testing recommendations that everyone aged 15 to 65 be screened for HIV infection. Teens younger than age 15 and adults older than 65 should also be screened if they are at increased risk for HIV infection; and all pregnant women, including women in labor who do not know if they are infected with HIV, should be screened. The CDC recommends an HIV test once a year for people at increased risk – such as gay and bisexual men, people who inject drugs, or people with multiple sex partners. CDC research suggests that sexually active gay and bisexual men might benefit from more frequent testing (e.g., every three to six months). Regular testing allows people who have HIV to know their status, get life-saving treatment and care, and prevent HIV transmission to others.

“Since many new infections are transmitted by individuals who do not know they are infected, undiagnosed infection remains a significant factor fueling the HIV epidemic,” said Bob Vella,

HIV Prevention Administrator for DPH. "Getting tested is quick and easy. And if your test is positive, you can seek medical treatment earlier. Early medical treatment can slow the progression of HIV and delay the onset of AIDS. Research shows that successful HIV treatment could reduce the viral load in a person's bloodstream to 'undetectable' levels. This can significantly reduce the risk of HIV transmission."

Added DPH Director Dr. Karyl Rattay, "Remember that your HIV test result expires every time you engage in risky behaviors like unprotected sex and needle sharing. Once this happens, you have to take the test all over again to ascertain your status. Also, an HIV test performed less than three months after the last possible exposure may miss early infection, hence the need to test annually, especially for those who continually engage in risky behaviors. Knowing your HIV status is empowering. When you know your status, you can take care of yourself and your loved ones."

Getting tested is easy and quick. DPH has partnered with several agencies to establish multiple testing sites statewide with rapid HIV testing kits that require only a single finger needle-stick and provide results within 10 minutes.

To find an HIV testing location near you for year-round testing opportunities, visit <http://www.hivtest.org/>.

National HIV Testing Day events in Delaware include:

New Castle County

AIDS Delaware – June 27, 2015

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

100 W. 10th St., Suite 315

Wilmington, DE 19801

Contact: 302-652-6776

About the event: Get your day started right and know your HIV status. Stop by for a cup of coffee, a doughnut, and a free

rapid HIV test. We now offer HIV testing for couples together.

Division of Public Health – June 26, 2015

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Porter State Service Center

511 W. 8th St.

Wilmington, DE 19801

Contact: Robert Watkins at 302-777-2872

About the event: HIV rapid testing for all who wish to be tested. Receive results in less than 15 minutes. Must show picture ID to be tested. Testing is free and all are encouraged to participate.

Beautiful Gate Outreach Center – June 26, 2015

9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Bethel AME Church

604 N. Walnut St.

Wilmington, Delaware 19801

Contact: Tamika Cobb at 302-472-3002

About the event: Following the annual theme of “Take the Test. Take Control,” we are offering free and confidential HIV testing and other health screenings, along with, free giveaways, and food. No appointment is necessary. Valid photo ID is required.

Kent County

Kent County Health Unit – June 22 to June 25, 2015

8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

James Williams State Service Center

805 River Road

Dover, DE 19901

Contact: Michelle Broadway or Andrea Keen at 302-857-5100

About the event: Delaware Division of Public Health will have daily free walk-in HIV testing and counseling on the second floor of the Kent County Health Unit.

Milford Health Unit – Friday June 26, 2015

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Milford State Service Center

253 NE Front St.

Milford, DE 19963

Contact: Raynard Brown or Kirsten McAllister at 302-424-7140

About the event: HIV testers/counselors will conduct free HIV testing and counseling. There will be educational and promotional items in free tote bags, including information on HIV, AIDS, and suicide prevention. Each person that gets tested can enter their name into a drawing to win one of the four themed gift baskets. The themes are: Movie Night Out, Car Detailing Kit, Pamper Yourself and Fun in the Kitchen.

Sussex County

CAMP Rehoboth Community Center – June 23, 2015

9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

37 Baltimore Ave.

Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971

Contact: 302-227-5620

About the event: CAMP Rehoboth to offer free HIV testing during National HIV Testing Week. The testing is fast and easy. Participants will get their results in less than 30 minutes.

Sussex County Health Unit – Saturday, June 27, 2015

11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Coolspring – in the Community Center

28375 Fisher Road

Milton, DE 19968

Contact: Mary Johnson at 302-515-3251, or Esther Dyce at 302-515-3246

About the event: Coolspring is having a block party. Information will be provided on HIV testing.

Delaware Health and Social Services is committed to improving

the quality of the lives of Delaware's citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, drink almost no sugary beverages.

###

Rita Landgraf, Secretary

Jill Fredel, Director of Communications

302-255-9047, Cell 302-357-7498

Email: jill.fredel@delaware.gov

[Delaware Health and Social Services](#) – [Division of Public Health](#)